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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/815,013

03/31/2004

Ronald S. Cok

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9204

7590

05/22/2006

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EXAMINER

LEPISTO, RYAN A

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2883

DATE MAILED: 05/22/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/815,013

Applicant(s)

COK ET AL

Examiner

Ryan Lepisto

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 28 April 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 8-14 and 20-29 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 8-14 and 27-29 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 20-26 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 31 March 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant did not receive an action on the merits last action and therefore the claims 23-26 will be considered below.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. **Claims 20-24** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by **Ferm et al (US 5,657,408)** (Ferm). Ferm teaches an integrated linear array of molded light-conductive pipes (Figs. 1-8, 11, 15) comprising light pipes (18) having an input face (14) and an output face (16) connected by an elongated body (18) of light-conductive transparent plastic like polycarbonate (column 8 lines 9-15) (and can include inhomogeneities that change the refractive index of the material, column 9 lines 10-14) and integral alignment features (the input and output face shape) being either a circle, square, hexagon, ellipse or rectangle (column 3 lines 22-24) so as to be able to align and fit together to maximize the fill factor (column 5 lines 10-20). The pipes are then stacked to in a faceplate configuration to create of flat-panel display (Figs. 11, 15 for example, abstract, column 1 lines 11-23, column 14 lines 31-35). With regard to the

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process of forming the pipes in the steps a through d, only structural limitations are considered in product claims and have been anticipated as described above.

"[E]ven though product-by-process claims are limited by and defined by the process, determination of patentability is based on the product itself. The patentability of a product does not depend on its method of production. If the product in the product-by-process claim is the same as or obvious from a product of the prior art, the claim is unpatentable even though the prior product was made by a different process." In re Thorpe, 777 F.2d 695, 698, 227 USPQ 964, 966 (Fed. Cir. 1985) (citations omitted)

The structure implied by the process steps should be considered when assessing the patentability of product-by-process claims over the prior art, especially where the product can only be defined by the process steps by which the product is made, or where the manufacturing process steps would be expected to impart distinctive structural characteristics to the final product. See, e.g., In re Garnero, 412 F.2d 276, 279, 162 USPQ 221, 223 (CCPA 1979).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

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3. **Claims 25 and 26** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fern as applied to claims 20-24 above, and further in view of **Border et al (US 6,441,077 B1)** (Border).

Fern teaches the pipes described above.

Fern does not teach expressly the plastic being an optical nanocomposite derivative of a plastic that has been modified with inorganic material to increase the refractive index.

Border teaches an optical nanocomposite derivative of a plastic that has been modified with inorganic material to increase the refractive index (column 4 line 17 – column 5 lines 55).

Fern and Border are analogous art because they are from the same field of endeavor, optical elements using polymer materials and inhomogeneities in the material to change the refractive index.

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to use the nanocomposite inorganic modifier in the plastic material as taught by Border in the plastic material taught by Fern since both teach a base of polycarbonate (Fern column 8 line 13, Border column 5 line 18) and since Fern teaches using inhomogeneities in the material to change the refractive index.

The motivation for doing so would have been increase focusing of the light by increasing the divergence of light from the output of the waveguide (Fern, column 9 lines 12-13) and decrease temperature sensitivity by using temperature compensating materials (Border, column 3 lines 10-15).

Response to Arguments

4. Applicant's arguments with respect to rejected claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Contact Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ryan Lepisto whose telephone number is (571) 272-1946. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th 7:30 AM - 5:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Frank Font can be reached on (571) 272-2415. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Ryan Lepisto

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Date: 5/9/06



Frank Font

Supervisory Patent Examiner

Technology Center 2800